

On

Inaugural  
Dissertation

On

Pertussis

or

Whooping  
Cough

By

Reed: Perkins

Nov. the 4<sup>th</sup> 1822Paper Month 13<sup>th</sup> 1823

This is of course  
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this disease  
endemic, and  
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Bronchitis, or  
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it often appears  
any obvious cause  
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This is of comparatively modern date. It was first noticed by Willis towards the close of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, this disease is commonly epidemic or more properly endemic, attacking certain neighbourhoods at different periods. I do not consider the whooping cough to be contagious or infectious, but arising from miasma or vapour which is impregnated with deleterious quality which so sensibly affects the Bronchia, or acts peculiar to its self on that important organ of respiration, we know that effluvia arising from vegetable matter produces different fevers at different periods and acts more or less as an endemic. It often appears suddenly in the country, without any obvious cause, and prevails throughout neighbourhoods of considerable extent, where the inhabitants are thinly settled - and the persons have no communication with each other. In these instances it frequently attacks, at the same time families remotely situated & between which no kind of intercourse exists - the disease must therefore be originated from the

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Atmosphere - but as my observations have not been  
sufficient as yet to prove the origin of the disease  
- it is always the safest practice to act as if we  
were under the impression that it is contagious &  
therefore when consulted, should always advise  
those that are not labouring under the disease  
to be removed out of the neighbourhood, of those  
that are affected, Much difference of opinion  
exists as to the true nature of its pathology - some  
are of opinion that it is seated in the air cells  
of the lungs. some in the Bronchia & others in  
the alimentary canal: There are also a great diversity  
of opinions about the nature of the disease - whilst  
some are of opinion that it is spasmodic, others that  
it is inflammatory - A very able man Dr Watt of  
Glasgow has lately taken up the subject and after  
repeated post mortem examinations & close & very stud  
investigations of the disease, comes to the conclusion  
that it is altogether a spasmodic affection - The  
whooping cough usually begins with hoarseness. A

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cough similar to common catarrh, with sometimes a slight fever. This cough becomes by degrees more harsh - and on inspiration a ringing sound is occasionally perceived - frequently there are intervals of several days in the early stage of the disease, that the cough is attended with no sonorous inspiration or at least with very little, the cough will appear peculiar in its violence, and by the convulsive rapidity of the inspirations threatening suffocation. In many cases these convulsive efforts alone mark the disease - frequently the whooping never occurs. The violence of the cough frequently brings on vomiting, which terminates the fit, and is a favourable sign. I have more frequently seen the paroxysm end in an expectoration of mucus from the Bronchia - but it is generally attended with more difficulty. It is almost constantly observable that within two or three minutes after a violent fit a slighter will occur, a circumstance which points out the disease at a very early period. The duration of the complaint is various, it generally continues

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from eight to ten weeks, and it often recurs with violence  
after it has appeared to remit, and almost to vanish.  
This sometimes proceeds from the damp atmosphere =  
but frequently happens from some unknown cause =  
The danger appears indeed always to be in proportion to  
the youth of the person. I have known it to prove  
very hurtful to suckling children: Owing to the inability  
of the child to possessing that degree of strength  
which is necessary for the expectoration of that coagulable  
mucus in Trachea. It has been supposed by some  
that suckling children are the most proper subjects  
for the disease as they have so frequently an involuntary  
vomiting = and I have no doubt when that is the  
case, it generally proves mild; The whooping cough  
has been known in some instances to terminate  
in apoplexy and suffocation = in some it lays the  
foundation for asthma and Phthisis Pulmonalis.  
If the fits are put an end to by vomiting it may  
be considered as a favourable symptom, as may likewise  
the taking place of a moderate and full expectoration

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On ensuing of a slight hemorrhage from the nose, dissections of those who have died of whooping cough usually show the consequence of the organs of respiration having been affected, and particularly those parts which are the seat of catarrh: hence the mucous membrane of the trachea, and bronchiae are commonly found in a morbid state. In many instances the lungs have exhibited highly morbid appearances, the trachea and its ramifications bearing vestiges of recent inflammation and the air cells and Bronchia, new their bifurcation filled with a whitish purulent looking mucus - serous accumulation in the pericardium is also frequently met with in some instances the lungs have been found adhering to the pleura. When the disease has been long protracted or has degenerated into Pulmonary consumption asthma, or visceral obstruction, the glands of the mesentery are found in a hard and enlarged state. In the treatment of pertussis two indications obviously present themselves, we are in the first or early stage to moderate its violence,

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and palliate urgent symptoms. Dr Chapman's treatment  
Evacuations seem best adapted for this purpose, they  
are to be directed by a sound judgment the patient  
being young plethoric and of a vigorous constitution  
must be bled. And in the progress of the disease  
it will often be necessary to repeat it. Willis and  
indeed most of the modern practitioners rely on  
N. S. vomiting purging & Bleeding, after bleeding  
give an emetic, and the nausea must be kept  
up for several days by small doses of antimonials.  
Dr Chapman speaks very highly indeed of calomel  
- says it displays something like a specific operation  
- what little I have seen of its employment in  
perhaps it acted something like a charm. we  
must not lose sight of local remedies. for congestion  
existing in the lungs a blister will prove highly  
serviceable. The disease being over & by depleting  
remedies in a great measure subdued, we are  
to change our practice. Nothing at this period is more  
settled than alikes.

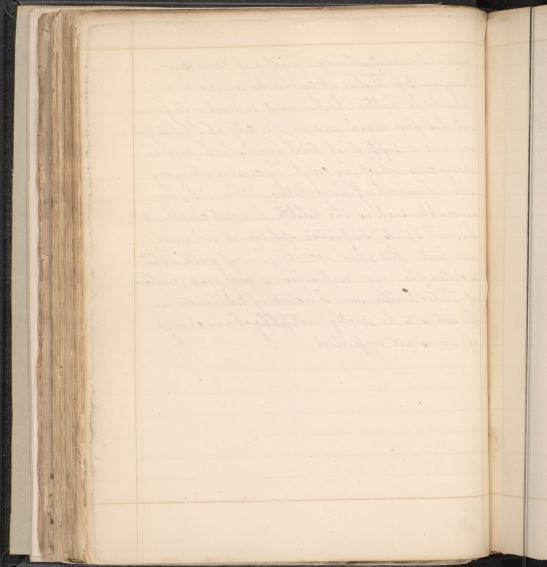
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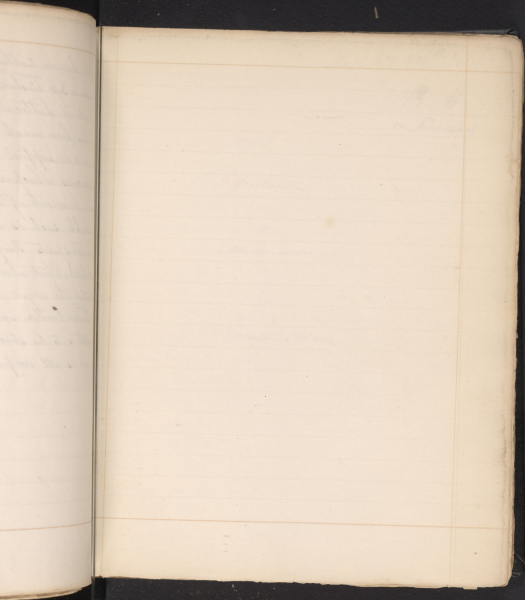
Carb: Sod. iij grs some of Speac 5 gutts. Laud: 3 gutts  
& water ℞: to be given every two hours to a child one  
Year old every 4. or Carb: Potaf 3i cochineal grs  
water 3ij Loaf sugar 5 grs a tea spoon, full to be  
given to a child one Year old every 3 hours. These  
are the proportions we are directed to use by most of the  
modern practitioners. But Dr Chapman thinks they ought  
to be employed in larger quantities under certain circumstances  
for Instance when there is much constipation or  
evacuation. Opium exhibited either alone or in  
combination with other medicines calms evocation  
& mitigates the patients sufferings, and this  
is all that is to be expected from it. he highly  
extolls musk. But from the difficulty of getting  
it pure, gives the preference to the artificial musk.  
It is given in the form of tincture or emulsion, - Oil  
of oubos a well remedy in this disease, six or eight  
drops are given on a lump of sugar - of all the  
antispasmodics asafetida is undoubtably to be preferred  
- This now brings me to a remedy of a very different

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mature. I mean Cauterides - Tincture of Bark 3ij  
Paregoric 3j Tincture of Cauterides 3i - this is a  
formula of Lutter who has said so much in its favour  
- it has been much used in the City of Philadelphia  
is, and in support of Dr Physick who says he  
always cures whooping cough by causing strangury  
alone - Liniments of an irritating nature are very  
serviceable such as the Notable Liniment composed  
Liniment of spirits Turpentine applied to the spine  
and breast - but above all the juice of garlic - what  
is called the royal embrocation is very good, composed  
of Luster Ointment and Tincture of Cauterides -  
The diet is to be strictly antiphlogistic - a change  
of air is all important





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